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Radio talk by Miss Mary Rokahr,  
Extension Economist, Home Management,  
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CAN FARM WOMEN HELP WITH THE FARM RECORD BOOK?

Thank you, Mr. Salisbury.

*W*  
*Ch*  
How do you do, Farm and Home Friends.

Today I am going to tell you about the new farm record book prepared by the U.S. Department of Agriculture in cooperation with the Agricultural Adjustment Administration. County agricultural agents will introduce this book into two million farm homes this spring. This means that two million farmers, and their wives, may keep an accurate record of the production and sales of basic commodities - - - corn, hogs, wheat, cotton, and so on. The farm record book will serve as an inventory of crops and livestock, and at the same time as a plan for farm business.

This new book is not a complete account book - please understand that - but it will help you to estimate more closely your probable income. Such an estimate will give you a good basis for planning your family finances.

I can visualize my friends as they take these records home. Mr. John Farmer No. 1 files his book in a table drawer, and says nothing about it to the rest of the family. Mr. John Farmer No. 2 takes the book home and mentions it casually to his wife. She forgets to look it over.

Mr. John Farmer No. 3 is "different". He gets a copy of the farm record from his county agent, takes it home, and tells his wife that this looks like a pretty important book. They read the note addressed to the Farmer which says: "This record book is furnished you to help you in studying and planning your own farm business and serve as a basis for contract applications and proof of compliance to the Agricultural Adjustment Administration. It may also be used as a basis for applications for production loans from the Farm Credit Administration."

The older children of the John Farmer family are interested. Before long the whole family is discussing farm plans for 1934. They decide to keep the record. It is not a complicated job. John Junior, who has a natural bent for figures, agrees to do the clerical work. (John's mother makes a mental note to keep the book in a convenient place, along with pencil and paper, pen and ink. She has looked over the record book, and suggests that her contribution in keeping it up to date will be such items as the home consumption of milk, cereals, and meats.

"I'll keep the hog section of the record," volunteers John Junior. "And I'll draw our fields in that map on page four."

"Go to it," says John Farmer, pleased to see that his family is enthusiastic about plans for 1934.

But then John Farmer's family always takes a lively interest in farm plans. His wife has a thorough knowledge of the business. That's why his labor income is nearly twice that of his neighbor, whose wife takes no interest in farm planning.

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The Indiana Experiment Station made a study of the homemaker's part in the success of farming, and discovered that the wife's help made a difference of 93 per cent higher labor income. Mrs. John Farmer has been helping keep records for a long time. When she first started, she got a farm-home account book from the Extension Service. I'm sure that a good many of you who are listening today have copies of these complete farm-home account books, furnished by the Extension Service.

A Nebraska homemaker said to me the other day: "When my husband asks me what our living expenses will be until spring or fall, I can answer his question intelligently. I have been keeping a record of what we spend, and from that record I can estimate our needs for the next six months."

Now, to get back to the new farm record book. Here's how you farm home-makers can help put these two million record books to work:

1. Encourage your husband to secure the record from your county agricultural agent. The book is free.
2. If your husband wants help in keeping the record, work out a definite plan so that each member of the family will know what his responsibilities are.
3. Offer yourself to keep the record of all food used in the home.
4. Select a "business center" in some room of the house, so that all members of the family will know where to find the record book, pencils, pen and ink, and such important papers as receipted bills.
5. Surprise your family by keeping account of where the money goes, as well as where it comes from. Your state college, county agent, or home demonstration agent will help you secure a book, and show you how to keep it.
6. Don't neglect the record during the season when crops are being harvested. Put reminders on your kitchen calendar, so that you will not forget to enter important business or transactions.

"They profit most who manage best", and good management involves plans based on past experience. Financial security is one of the goals we strive for in living. Farm and home records will help us toward that financial security. Two million farm record books kept during 1934 should mean two million farm homes in better shape to plan their farm business for 1935.